



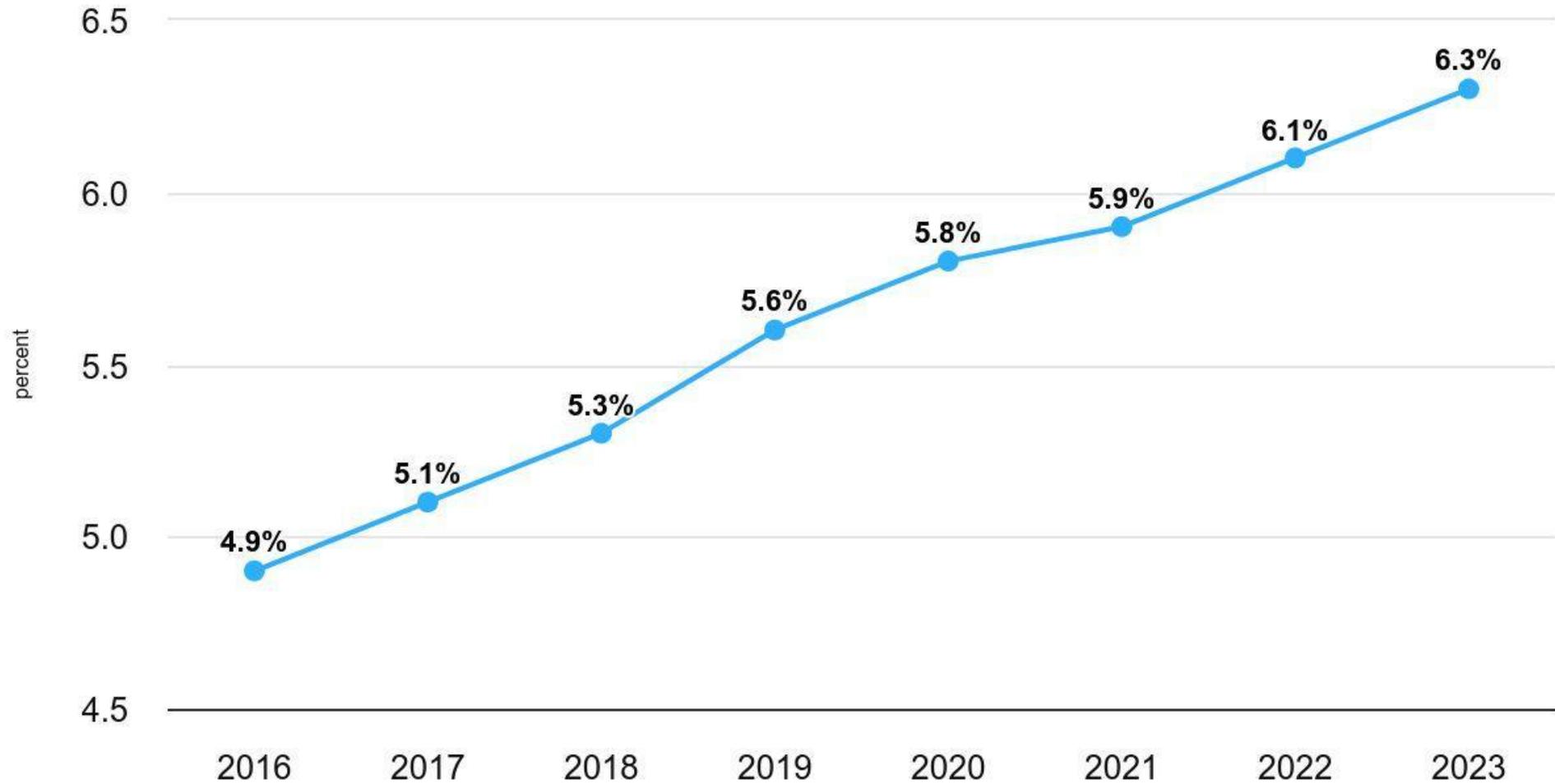
ST. MARY'S COUNTY
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Harnessing the Power of Language to Promote Health Equity

**St. Mary's County Health Department
Language Services Unit**



Population Hispanic or Latino County: St. Mary's



Language Services

Bilingual Care Coordinator

**Lidia Álvarez Campos,
CCHW**

Spanish Medical Interpreter
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Team Lead

**Alissa Gamberg,
MA Spanish**

Qualified Spanish Medical Interpreter
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As Qualified Spanish Medical Interpreters,
we harness the power of our language skills
to promote health in our community.

We love seeing the impact of our work
every day!

What Are “Language Services”?

We LOVE what we do! We get to provide the following services for **Spanish speakers*** in our community and staff across our agency:

- A. Interpretation**
- B. Care Coordination**
- C. Translation
- D. Notarization

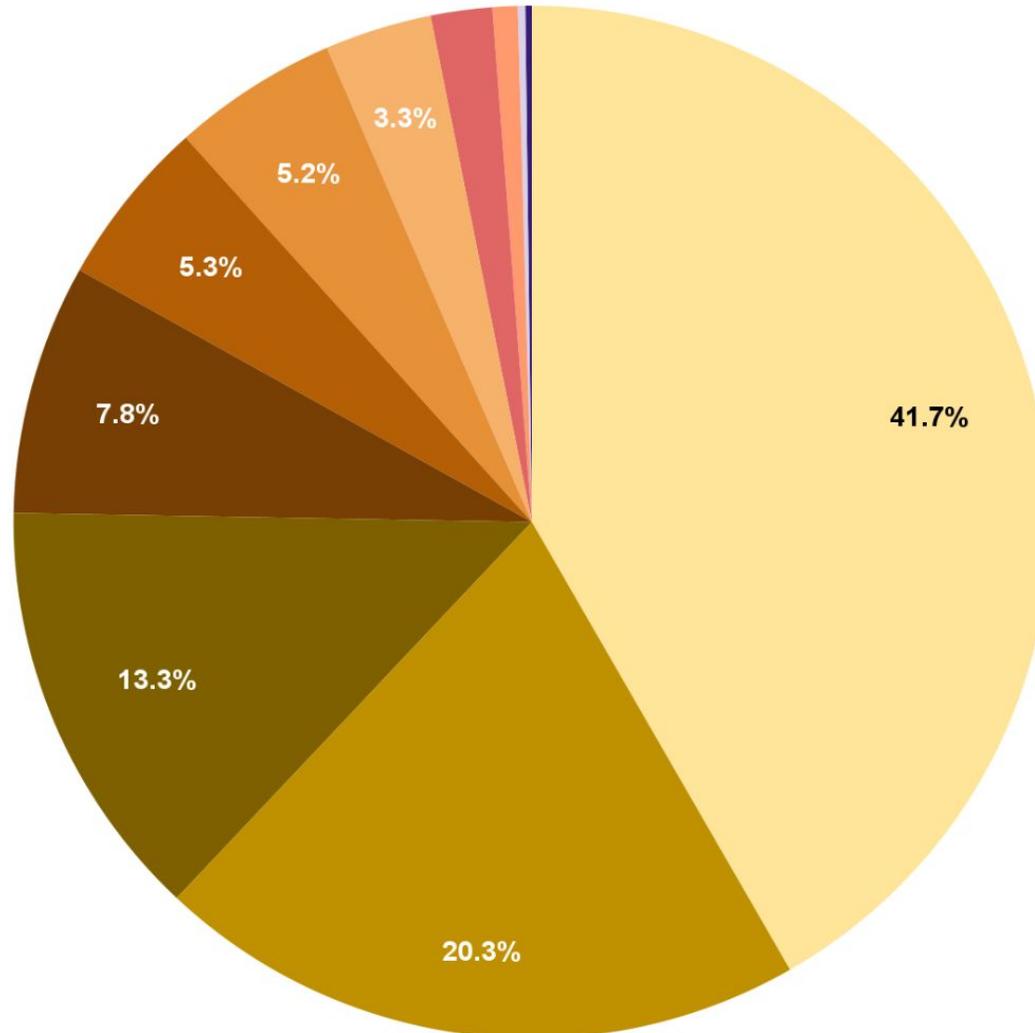


**For languages other than Spanish, phone interpreters are accessed via LanguageLine Solutions*

Programs Supported by SMCHD Language Services in FY25

● Clinic ● CPEST ● MCHP ● Dental ● Spring Ridge ● Other Language Services ● Health Hub ● WIC ● Margaret Brent ● Environmental ● Asthma

1. Clinical services (women's health, immunizations)
2. Cancer Prevention, Education, Screening, and Treatment (CPEST)
3. Medicaid
4. Dental Program
5. Spring Ridge School-Based Health Center
6. Miscellaneous
7. Health Hub (Behavioral)
8. WIC
9. Margaret Brent School-Based Health Center
10. Environmental Health
11. Asthma



What is Translation?

- ✓ **Written** language only
- ✓ Performed independently (translator only), over **varying timelines** (hours, days, weeks)
- ✓ Translators:
 - Produce a **written deliverable** in the target language
 - Take into account differences of culture and dialect
 - Work in one direction: EN>SP or SP>EN



Definition

LEP = Limited English Proficient

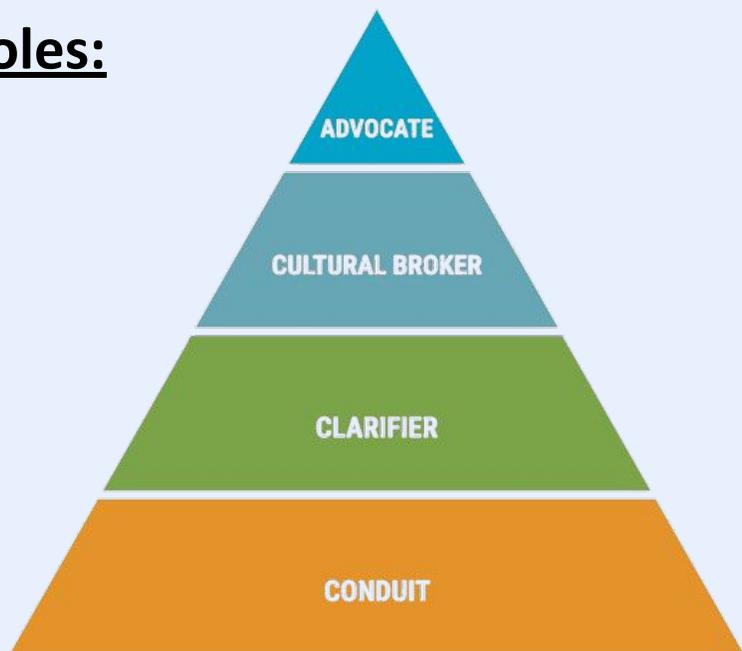
What is Care Coordination?

- ✓ The “behind-the-scenes” of appointments
- ✓ **Two parties:** Care Coordinator interviews Spanish-speaking community member
- ✓ Use our knowledge of agency programs to connect clients to services
- ✓ Attend outreach events to promote services
- ✓ Organize educational workshops exclusively for the Spanish speaking community (*charlas*)



What is Interpretation?

- ✓ **Spoken** language only
- ✓ Performed simultaneously or consecutively in **real time**
- ✓ Interpreters work in **both** directions: EN<>SP
- ✓ The interpreter has **four (4) main roles**:



Tips and Best Practices

for working with LEP patients and their interpreter

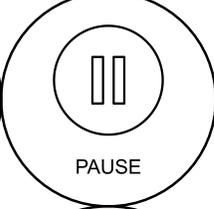
*The St. Mary's County Health Department
Language Services Unit Presents*



How to Work with a Spoken Language Interpreter

*Language Access in Action to Help You Communicate
with the Limited English Proficient (LEP) Person*

Tips and Best Practices... (cont'd)

- | | | |
|------------------|--|---|
| TIP
01 | Make eye contact with your LEP patient/client |  |
| TIP
02 | Use Direct Speech (talk <i>TO</i> the LEP person, not about them!) |  |
| TIP
03 | Use Short Phrases to help your interpreter be more accurate |  |
| TIP
04 | Pause Often so the interpreter can interpret what you've said |  |
| TIP
05 | Use Names - know your interpreter's name and especially your LEP client/patient's name! |  |

Find **3** things wrong with
the following scenario

TIME TO INVESTIGATE

Background: A provider is meeting with an LEP, Spanish-speaking patient for an exam. This is the patient's first time in the clinic. A Spanish interpreter is present in the room with the provider and patient.

[Provider] Can you ask her what brings her in today? Also if she's taking any medication, has an allergies or significant past medical history like surgeries, hospitalizations or chronic disease (asthma or diabetes)?

Staff

Testimonials

“

Working with in person language services provides a clarity for our patients that doesn't seem to be matched with telephone interpretation. There is a sense of increased ease and understanding with both the conversation and overall interaction. This allows for more comprehensive care.

We are thankful for the work the LEP team does for our patients!

MEAGHAN LANSLEY, BS, MSN, RN, ANP-BC
Nurse Practitioner

“

The presence of an in-person interpreter during a mental health appointment is invaluable. Their physical presence fosters a sense of connection and warmth that is often lacking in phone-based interpretation. This personal interaction helps put the individual or family at ease, creating a more supportive and comfortable environment for care.

JODY BOYERS, LCSW-C
Social Worker

“

My program (CPEST) wouldn't be where it is without the Language Services team. The program has grown into what it is today all because of our in house interpreters and the positive rapport they have with the community. Having them in house makes SUCH a difference. The interpreters know our program so the interaction with our patients is so positive, fluid and easy going. I love our Language Services Team!

CAITLIN KIRKPATRICK, BSN, RN
CPEST Program Supervisor and Lead Nurse
Case Manager

Join Our **Facebook Group for the Hispanic Community** in
St. Mary's County!

“Comunidad Hispana del Departamento de Salud de St. Mary”



SCAN ME

And Remember...

- **Not all Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals are literate**—even in their native language! Therefore, *translation is not always the best solution* for providing health information to an LEP individual.
- Working efficiently with an interpreter requires you to be diligent about your own speech patterns. This is about accommodating everyone's language needs. **Slow down, listen, and give space.**

Questions?



References

- [U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Public Briefing on Language Access](#)
- [Translator vs. Interpreter \(American Translators Association\)](#)
- [Interpreter Breaks Down How Real-Time Translation Works | WIRED](#)
- [Language, Culture, And Medical Tragedy: The Case Of Willie Ramirez | Health Affairs Forefront](#)

LEARN 